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CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES FOR ATTACKING INDIA THROUGH BURMESE TERRITORY

USIB MEMORANDUM

Submitted by the
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Concurred in by the
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

As indicated overleaf

28 May 1963

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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and NSA.

Concurred in by the
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

on 28 May 1963. Concurring were the Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence), Department of the Navy; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; the Director for Intelligence, Joint Staff; and the Director of the National Security Agency. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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C E N T R A L I N T E L L I G E N C E A G E N C Y

28 May 1963

SUBJECT: CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES FOR ATTACKING INDIA THROUGH
BURMESE TERRITORY

THE PROBLEM

25X1 To assess the maximum offensive capabilities of Communist China's military forces against India in an attack through Burma. No estimate is to be made of Chinese intentions. The attacks considered in this paper are those the Chinese Communists have the theoretical capability to mount in addition to those described in USIB Memorandum, "Chinese Communist Ground Threat Against India from Tibet and Sinkiang," dated 17 April 1963, and "[] Estimate of the Communist Chinese Air Threat Against India," dated 17 January 1963.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. The Government of Burma would not resist the movement of Chinese forces across Burmese territory and would acquiesce in the utilization by the Chinese of Burmese transportation facilities and airfields along the routes of advance.

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2. The Burmese would not actively support the Chinese.
3. The Chinese would not divert any forces for security in Burma.
4. The Chinese would not augment ground and air forces along China's borders with countries in southeast Asia.
5. The Chinese would use port and rail facilities in North Vietnam.

CONCLUSIONS

A. In an attack on India through Burma we believe that the Chinese Communists would use Kunming as their base of supply. Kunming is served by a rail line from Hanoi in North Vietnam and by road from the Chinese railhead at Anshun, and these facilities could support limited operations in the China-Burma-India theater. The Chinese could use two principal routes to move supplies through Burma: (a) the Ledo Road via Myitkyina and (b) the Lashio-Mandalay-Imphal road. (Paras. 1-2)

B. After essential road improvements the Chinese could move a total of 500 tons per day to support ground operations in India. We estimate that the maximum ground force the Chinese could deploy in an attack into India through Burma would be about 68,000 men, composed of approximately five infantry divisions under the command of an army headquarters. The most favorable period for operations in the area occurs after the beginning of the dry season in November. (Paras. 3-9)

C. We estimate the force advancing over the Ledo Road would consist of one light infantry division, and one standard infantry division. The attack, we believe, would have the objective of destroying Indian forces, the seizure of the Digboi oil fields and the eventual link-up with Chinese forces advancing from Tibet into the eastern part of the Northeast Frontier Agency (NEFA). We estimate the force advancing through Imphal would consist of the major elements of two light infantry divisions and one standard infantry division. This attack, we believe, would have the objective of destroying Indian forces and, together with the attacks from Tibet, the occupation of important areas of northeast India. (Paras. 8-11)

D. We believe the Chinese would employ about 395 combat aircraft in operations against northeast India. This force would probably consist of 300 MIG-15/17 jet fighters, 75 IL-28 light get bombers, and 20 TU-2 light piston bombers. We estimate that these aircraft would provide a daily sortie rate of about 360. Approximately 120 transport aircraft would be available to support operations from Burma. (Paras. 12-16)

E. We believe that the Chinese have the purely military resources -- personnel, equipment, weapons, and ammunition -- to conduct operations through Burma and simultaneously attack along the Himalayan front. If such operations were undertaken, logistic support would require approximately 25 percent (50,000) of the nation's truck park and, on an annual

basis, more than 50 percent (750,000 tons) of the motor gasoline available in all of China in 1962. It would necessitate a drastic reallocation of the nation's transportation and POL resources, and the Chinese would be confronted with extremely formidable maintenance and replacement problems. (Paras. 17-19)

F. We believe that the Chinese could launch attacks from Tibet and Sinkiang with little or no warning. We believe the attack through Burma, on the other hand, would give Indian defenses weeks of warning. Even if the Chinese could do the road rebuilding surreptitiously or under the guise of some peaceful purpose, the attacking columns would require three or four weeks to close in their attack positions at the Indo-Burma border, and probably would be quickly detected. (Para. 20)

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DISCUSSION

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Next 22 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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